

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 15, 2000

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—1999–2000 REGULAR SESSION

Assembly Joint Resolution

No. 53

**Introduced by Assembly Members Jackson, Scott, and
Villaraigosa**

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Alquist, Aroner, Bock,
Calderon, Cardenas, Cedillo, Corbett, Davis, Dutra,
Firebaugh, Gallegos, Havice, Hertzberg, Honda, Keeley,
Knox, Kuehl, Lempert, Longville, Lowenthal, Mazzoni,
Migden, Nakano, Papan, Romero, Shelley, Steinberg,
Strom-Martin, Thomson, Torlakson, Vincent, Washington,
Wayne, Wesson, and Wildman)*

March 27, 2000

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 53—Relative to gun control.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 53, as amended, Jackson. Gun control.

This measure would respectfully memorialize the Congress and the President of the United States to enact commonsense gun legislation including laws that will limit handgun purchases, require background checks, reinstate a specified waiting period, require child safety locks, and ban specified weapons. This bill would also direct the Chief Clerk of the Assembly to transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The illegal and violent use of firearms
2 victimizes more than one million Americans every year,
3 and although recent crime statistics show the rate of
4 violent crime dropping, the rate of criminal use of
5 firearms remains high; and

6 WHEREAS, According to the Centers for Disease
7 Control and Prevention, over 4,200 children died from
8 gunfire in the United States in 1997, including homicides,
9 suicides, and accidental shootings, which is nearly 13 per
10 day and almost 600 annually in California alone, and for
11 every child that is killed in the United States with a gun,
12 four are wounded with a gun; and

13 WHEREAS, American children are at a higher risk
14 from firearms than children of any other industrialized
15 nation in the world, with the rate of firearm death of
16 children under 14 years old being nearly 12 times higher
17 in the United States than in 25 other industrialized
18 nations combined; and

19 WHEREAS, According to the New England Journal of
20 Medicine, guns kept in the home for protection are 43
21 times more likely to kill a family member or a friend than
22 to kill an intruder, and the presence of a gun in the home
23 triples the risk of a homicide in the home; and

24 WHEREAS, Many gun owners store firearms in a
25 bedroom or closet, versus in a locked case, cabinet, or
26 vault; and

27 WHEREAS, According to the Journal of the American
28 Medical Association, more than 1.2 million elementary
29 schoolaged children have access to guns in their homes;
30 and

31 WHEREAS, According to the National Safety Council,
32 gun accidents are the fifth leading cause of accidental
33 death for children aged 14 and under; and

34 WHEREAS, Even though firearms are designed to
35 cause death and injury, they are completely exempt from
36 national consumer protection regulations that protect
37 children from poorly made toys, products, and common

1 household items, and, therefore, can cause injury or death
2 if handled improperly; and

3 WHEREAS, Injuries caused by firearms are costly to
4 treat, averaging over \$13,000 per patient, which drains
5 public healthcare dollars; and

6 WHEREAS, In the last three years there have been
7 several tragic shootings in schools and day care centers
8 that have injured or killed innocent children; and

9 WHEREAS, Many accidental shootings and
10 gun-related homicides and suicides are caused by
11 firearms improperly or illegally handled by minors; and

12 WHEREAS, The criminal use of guns and related gun
13 violence has become a public health matter of epidemic
14 proportions, causing children and families across the
15 country to endure the loss of loved ones to gun violence,
16 to get caught in the crossfire of firearm-related domestic
17 violence, and to live in fear of being struck by random
18 bullets; and

19 WHEREAS, This year, President Bill Clinton
20 announced increased funding and landmark regulatory
21 and executive actions to bolster enforcement efforts and
22 crack down on problem gun dealers in order to halt illegal
23 firearm trafficking and prevent firearms from getting
24 into the hands of criminals; and

25 WHEREAS, The Million Mom March, an
26 extraordinary, nationwide grass-roots mobilization to
27 march in Washington, D.C. on Mother's Day 2000 to
28 demand Congress to pass commonsense gun laws by
29 Mother's Day, is being led primarily by mothers from all
30 walks of life moved to action by insidious gun violence
31 against children; and

32 WHEREAS, The Million Mom March will also be taking
33 place in small and large cities across America to call
34 attention to the senseless loss of life from gun violence and
35 to demand that policymakers at all levels act immediately
36 to pass sensible guns laws to protect citizens, particularly
37 children, from gun violence; and

38 WHEREAS, The California Legislature recently passed
39 and Governor Gray Davis signed commonsense gun
40 measures, including laws requiring most handguns to

1 meet basic safety requirements, restricting ‘copycat’
2 assault weapons, prohibiting large capacity ammunition
3 magazines, requiring firearms to be accompanied by an
4 approved safety device and a warning, restricting
5 handgun purchases to one per month, and improving
6 security at gun shows, thereby putting California at the
7 forefront of efforts to protect citizens from gun violence;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, Despite alarming statistics and growing
10 public concern about gun violence, the 106th Congress
11 failed in its first year to successfully pass commonsense
12 gun legislation that would have provided American
13 citizens with additional protections from gun violence;
14 now, therefore, be it

15 *Resolved by the Assembly and Senate of the State of*
16 *California, jointly,* That the Legislature of the State of
17 California hereby respectfully memorializes the
18 Congress and the President of the United States to enact
19 commonsense gun legislation this session including laws
20 that would (1) limit handgun purchases to one per person
21 per month to reduce gun trafficking; (2) require
22 background checks for all firearms purchased from
23 licensed dealers and at gun shows; (3) reinstate a
24 three-day waiting period for firearm purchases to ensure
25 a cooling-off period and allow time for a background
26 check; (4) require the sale of child safety locks with every
27 handgun sold; and (5) ban assault weapons and
28 high-capacity magazines that do not have any legitimate
29 sporting or hunting purpose; and be it further

30 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly
31 transmit copies of this resolution to the President and
32 Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the
33 House of Representatives, and to each Senator and
34 Representative from California to the Congress of the
35 United States.

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